

Random Encounters

Fharlanghn's Garden

By Stan!



The Milestone and the Rod of Leagues

What is it that every hero needs to complete a quest? Some would answer that philosophically by saying bravery or determination. Others would be pragmatic and say a sword or other weapon. Worshipers of Fharlanghn, though, will without hesitation tell you that the answer is a road.

Whether it is literal or figurative, every quest follows a path, and the only way to successfully complete the task at hand is to follow that path to its ultimate end. Of course, the more significant the quest is, the more winding the road will be, and the more side roads will lead away from the true goal. Correctly navigating these avenues and byways is the key to success.



As the god of roads, Fharlanghn might also be considered the god of quests. Over the years, his devotees have invented a pair of magic items designed to make it easier to find one's way along the road of life.

Milestone: This small pendant, worn around the neck, is shaped like a marker one might find at a crossroads. Made of granite, each of its four sides is engraved with one of the cardinal compass points. By concentrating for 1 round, the wearer can identify any compass direction she can name (examples include north, southwest, and east-northeast).

At will, someone wearing a *milestone* can find the shortest, most direct physical route to any location, as if she was the target of a *find the path* spell. To begin this effect, the wearer must spend 1 minute concentrating on the intended location. Once the stone is focused, it displays the current distance between the wearer and the intended locale. The distance appears as a number apparently carved on the appropriate face of the *milestone*. If the locale lies two miles to the north, a number 2 would appear on the side of the stone marked "North." Distance is measured in quarter mile units, and the distance may appear on two separate faces. (For example, distance might appear on both the north and west faces if the locale lies to the northwest).

Caster Level: 6th; *Prerequisites:* Craft Wondrous Item, *find the path*; *Market Price:* 64,800 gp; *Weight:* --.

Rod of Leagues: This sturdy, 5-foot tall wooden rod looks like a walking stick (and can be used as one) and has the names of various cities, villages, and historical sites carved across its length. Once per day the rod may be activated to grant the wielder the benefits of an *expeditious retreat* spell; these effects last for up to 8 hours. If the wielder performs any action other than a move or free action, the effect ends immediately. When the effect ends, the wielder is fatigued.

Additionally, if a character casts a *teleport* spell while holding a *rod of leagues*, he may consider any locale that appears on the rod as someplace with which he is "very familiar." A *rod of leagues* can hold the names of up to 10 locales. When the rod is created, the creator may inscribe any 10 locales with which she is already very familiar; thereafter, the wielder may replace any of the existing locales with a locale of his choice. To do so, the wielder must currently be in the locale that he is adding and must spend 10 minutes using a dagger or other blade to carve the name of that place onto the rod on top of the locale that is being eliminated. Instead of wearing the rod away, the old locale name is magically erased and replaced with the new name. Once completed, the locale name appears in the normal handwriting of the carver, as though written with a fine pen rather than carved with a blade.

Caster Level: 10th; *Prerequisites:* Craft Rod, *expeditious retreat*; *Market Price:* 21,000 gp; *Weight:* 5 lb.

Using the Milestone and Rod of Leagues Together

The *milestone* and *rod of leagues* are remarkably useful items, and they were created to celebrate the glory of Fharlanghn's providence. However, they have an additional function known only by the most faithful servants of the Dweller on the Horizon. The following information will be common knowledge to any cleric of Fharlanghn who has reached 8th level or higher. Other characters may discover it by succeeding at a bardic knowledge or Knowledge (religion) check (DC 30) or through use of the *legend lore* spell.

If one person holds both a *milestone* and a *rod of leagues*, a new place name appears on the rod. A wielder who is not specifically looking for this additional name must make a Spot check (DC 15) to notice it. The place name is "Journey's End." Unless the character succeeds at one of the Knowledge checks described above, this name has no meaning to him, and it cannot be found on any maps. Those who know say that Journey's End is a garden favored by Fharlanghn -- a blessed

place where a traveler can find comfort, rest, and safety.

The *milestone* reveals the distance and direction to Journey's End only to someone who wields a *rod of leagues*. And although the rod cannot be used as a focus to *teleport* there (it is the one locale that is exempt to the rod's power), a wielder who also has a *milestone* can double the rod's movement abilities when traveling to Journey's End.

Bringing the Parts Together

Although random encounters usually happen by chance, some DMs may wish to tie these five parts together into something that could lead to further adventures. Obviously, introducing both items into your campaign allows PCs to venture forth on a journey to Journey's End!

Coming in Part 2 of Fharlanghn's Garden

In the second part, learn about the eternal pilgrimage.

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